



Southern Regional Assembly
11th November 2022, 12:00pm
Assembly House, Waterford and via GoToMeeting

Minutes

Presiding: Cllr. Oliver Walsh, Cathaoirleach

Present: Cllr. Pip Breen, Cllr. Joe Carroll, Cllr. Conor D McGuinness, Cllr. Garret Kelleher, Cllr. Tom Cronin, Cllr. Ken Murnane.

Remote Attendance via GoToMeeting: Cllr. Dan Boyle, Cllr. Sean O'Connor, Cllr. Maura Bell, Cllr. Gillian Coughlan, Cllr. Siobhan Ambrose, Cllr. PJ Kelly, Cllr. Deirdre Forde, Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien, Cllr. Alan O'Callaghan, Cllr. Thomas Kinsella, Cllr. Michael Murphy, Cllr. Michael O'Meara, Cllr. Shelia O'Callaghan, Cllr. John Brennan, Cllr. Gerard Murphy, Cllr. Robert Beasley, Cllr. John Sheahan, Cllr. Noel Coonan, Cllr. Séamus Cosáí Fitzgerald, Cllr. Michael Collins, Cllr. Frankie Daly, Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Cllr. Thomas Phelan, Cllr. Michael O'Shea, Cllr. Terry Shannon.

Apologies: None.

Officials Present: David Kelly, Kevin Lynch, Enda Hogan, Sharon Murray, Marie Harnett, Lisa Moran, Maria Murphy, Anna Higgins, Catherine Connaughton.

Officials Remote Attendance via GoToMeeting: Dominic Walsh, Robert Fennelly, Michael Buckley, Siobhan Rudden, Karen Coughlan, Sarah Davoren, Breda Curran, Áine Whelan, Elayne McDonnell, Yvonne Cooney, Róisín Kiely.

External Presenters Present: Philip Newsome, Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC), Alana Johnston, Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC).

A record of attendance was taken by means of roll call.

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 14th October

The Members adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 14th October 2022, proposed by Cllr. Gerard Murphy and seconded by Cllr. Michael O'Shea. Cllr. Thomas Phelan made an observation that he felt the minutes didn't fully reflect his comments or the depth of the discussion on the work of the Assembly.

2. Matters Arising

None.

3. Presentation on the Climate Action Plan & Renewable Energy Transformation: Philip Newsome & Alana Johnston, DECC

Kevin Lynch introduced Philip Newsome and Alana Johnston of from the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) who gave a presentation (copy available) on the Securing the Renewable Energy Transformation.

A discussion followed with contributions from Cllr. C McGuinness, Cllr. O'Shea, Cllr. Phelan, Cllr. Breen, Cllr. Boyle, Cllr. Carroll, Cllr. O'Meara, Cllr. Kelly.

4. Draft Budget 2023

David Kelly referred to the proposed budget and thanked Sharon Murray and her team for preparing the Annual Budget 2023. The budget includes an increase from last year's due the rising costs generally, the salary increases due to the National Wage Agreement and a provision for additional staff in 2023. However, due to the COVID 19 pandemic several budget lines were either unspent or underutilised in 2022. Therefore, these amounts are being returned to the LA's in the form of a credit against the 2023 requirement resulting in an overall reduction on the LA demand of 5.5%.

David Kelly noted that an energy efficiency audit on Assembly House recommended actions to help the Assembly to deliver on public sector energy efficiency and carbon reduction targets under the Government's Climate Action Plan 2021. These actions will be carried out between now and 2030. The Assembly will make a start with building energy efficiency measures in 2023. Funding of these measures will come from the reserves and not the 2023 budget. Similarly, planned investment in an upgrade of the audio-visual technology in the Chamber room in 2023 to support hybrid meetings will come from the reserves and not the 2023 budget.

The Annual Budget for 2022 was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Ken Murnane and seconded by Cllr. Pip Breen.

5. Any Other Business

- Cllr. O'Shea raised a query regarding how many Members availed of the conference contribution from the Assembly during the Covid 19 pandemic. He asked for the conference contribution for Members to be extended until January 2023. David Kelly stated approximately three Members availed of the conference contributions from the Assembly and a trip to Brussels in 2022. David Kelly advised that a new budget heading for conferences would be in place for 2023 and that Members notify the Assembly regarding which conference they would like to attend.
- David Kelly informed the Members that the Association of Irish Regions (AIR) conference will take place in February 2023 and details will be circulated to the Members in the next few weeks.
- Cllr. Carroll requested the travel arrangements for the trip to Brussels next year include travelling through Cork Airport (Southern Region) and not Dublin Airport. Cllr. Phelan agreed with Cllr. Carroll regarding using the Southern regional airports.
- David Kelly advised that he received a response from Minister McGrath of Public Expenditure & Reform regarding the Motion passed by the Members in October's meeting. Minister McGrath seeking additional funding for local authorities. The Minister had passed the motion to Minister Darragh O'Brien of Housing, Local Government and Heritage for his review. Cllr. Carroll noted budget proposals for local authorities in County Cork are being turned down and funding is urgently needed.
- Cllr. Phelan enquired if the Assembly has a role as Regional Assembly on the South East Energy Agency to make them aware of available funding. David Kelly commented the Assembly is working with the South East Energy Agency on a number of EU funded projects and they carried out the energy audit on Assembly House.
- Cllr. Phelan queried if the Assembly have representation on the governing body of SETU. David Kelly confirmed the Assembly is not on the governing body of SETU but collaborates with them on several projects. The Assembly is partnering with SETU on a European University Alliance project.
- Cllr. Phelan noted under the Standing Orders four SPA meetings are to take place each year and asked for their return to discuss more sub-regional issues. David Kelly stated he is reviewing the SPA meetings for next year.

- Enda Hogan noted a call under the European Urban Initiative (EUI) around sustainable urban development which is targeted at cities. Cork, Limerick and Waterford cities can apply for funding under this call. Details are available on the [EU Calls Monitor](#) on the Regional Assembly website. There is no national contact point for EUI but Lisa Moran, EU Project Officer in the Assembly, will reach out to the three Local Authorities to make sure they are aware of the call.
- Kevin Lynch updated the Members on the Regional Statutory Plans notably a number of LAPs which fall outside the meeting schedule, but the Assembly will provide a general high level support submission on each LAP.
- Cllr. Cronin queried the LA's process of land zoning and how can landowners appeal or get clarity on the zoning decisions.
- The Members passed a Motion of Sympathy to Cllr. Boyle on the recent death of his mother.
- The Members passed a Motion of Sympathy to a staff member Edel Hunt on the recent death of her husband.

6. Date of Next Meeting

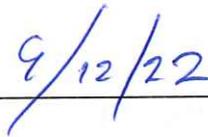
Friday, 9th December 2022 in-person and online.

Signed:



Cllr. Oliver Walsh
Cathaoirleach

Date:





AGENDA

11th November 2022

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on the 14th October 2022.
2. Matters Arising
3. Presentation on the Climate Action Plan & Renewable Energy Transformation: Alana Johnston & Philip Newsome, DECC
4. Draft Budget 2023
5. Any Other Business
6. Date of Next Meeting